METHODISM DEFENDED,

AND

PRELATICAL SUCCESSION REFUTED:

BEING

A REPLY

TO

"Tracts for the People, No. 4,"

BY REV. A. ATWOOD.

Rebuke them sharply that they may be sound in the faith.—St. Paul.
Neither be ye called masters, for one is your Master even Christ.—Christ.
And thou hast tried them, which say they are Apostles, and are not, and hast found them Liars.—Christ.

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INTRODUCTION.

The object of this tract is, first to refute the assertion made in "Tracts for the People, No. 4," that Mr. Wesley never intended to erect the Methodists in this country, into a separate independent Church. Mr. Wesley is the witness.

We assert that he did—this proved, and the author of said tract is convicted of bearing false witness against his neighbor, thus sinning against a specific command of God.

Secondly, to promote catholic or universal truth, by showing that there is no such thing as the personal succession of prelatical ordination. That the true and only succession is that of *faith* and *love*. All else is a "*tinkling* symbol," making a *beautiful noise*, but all is sound only. Nor is there any true unity but of *faith* and *love*. All other unity, in the absence of these, is like self-righteousness, the less we have of it the better. The Protestant Episcopal Church is the witness both in this country and in Europe. See also the history of religion in the Italian States, and South America.

The sincerity of the author of "Tract No. 4" is questioned, because he suppresses a part of the truth, to promote his own sect.

No attempt is made to show that Protestant Episcopalians have not the rights of other sects, or that they are enthusiastic to a fault, for spiritual things; but chiefly for such as are visible and external.

Neither is it said that none among them are devout and pious. The author knows it to be otherwise. There are many, both among their ministry and laity, who were awakened and brought to God, by means of Methodist labors.

No concessions are however made for sake of unity however desirable. We dare not exchange that which is spiritual, for that which is barely outward and formal, though it have the sanction of ancient Roman Catholics.

Where "Tract No. 4" was published, I know not. But the Protestant Episcopal Church in Harrisburg, it seems, has adopted it; as they keep it for sale, and their Minister has circulated it. I therefore hold them as responsible as though they had been its author. Methodist ministers, in every place where it is circulated, should do the same, and this secret slander would soon cease.

METHODISM

IS A CHURCH, AS WELL AS A SOCIETY—HAS VALID SACRAMENTS, DULY ADMINISTERED—HAS A SCRIPTURAL MINISTRY, WITH DIVINE WARRANT, SEEN IN ITS ORIGIN, DESIGN AND PROGRESS.

Some "busy body in other men's matters," has taken the pains to publish in a small work, called "Traets for the People, No. 4," what I esteem a slander on both Mr. Wesley, and the Methodist Episeopal Church in this eountry. The author, whoever he is, has seen best to eoneeal his name; and to make seereey the more profound, and put it totally out of our power to aseertain who had the moral courage to write this most singular and inconsistent produetion, even the names of the publisher and printer are eonealed. So, that like a distinguished Priest of olden time, it has neither "father nor mother." But, as I presume it is held for sale by Protestant Episcopalians, or at least some of them, with the approbation of others. And it is a well known matter, that it has been gratuitously eireulated, by some who hold responsible stations among them.—They *are* therefore held responsible for the eonsequenees which may follow it.

The author of the above named "Tract," holds this doetrine: "*Mr. Wesley never intended to form a Church in this country.*"—"*The Methodists, in having become such, or in assuming to be such, have gone contrary to the expressed wishes of Mr. Wesley.*"—"*This was the position of Methodism up to the day of Mr. Wesley's death.*"—"*It is put together by men.*"—"*They made themselves a Ministry.*"—"*They made themselves Saeraments.*"—"*If they were a Chureh, then may the Abolition Soeiety at length become a Chureh.*"—"*Then may the Moral Reform Soeiety become a Chureh.*"—"*Then may the Temperanee Society beeome a Chureh.*"—"*Can one believe it,—can one trust his religious interests, &c.*"—"*The voice of Wesley*

is still consistently declaring these pretensions REBELLION AGAINST GOD."—"THE METHODISTS ARE IN A STATE OF SIN AGAINST GOD."

In reply to all this, I will not attempt to say more than the founder of Methodism himself has said. He has said quite sufficient to show, that the writer of "Tract No. 4" has been guilty of "bearing false witness against his neighbor," who was living at peace with him. And as the receiver of stolen goods is judged to be as bad as the thief, the venders and distributors share in his guilt. Let Mr. Wesley speak for himself and for us.

LETTER TO DR. COKE, MR. ASBURY, AND OUR BRETHREN IN NORTH AMERICA.*

"BRISTOL, *September* 10, 1784.

1. "By a very uncommon train of providence, many of the provinces of North America are totally disjoined from their mother country, and erected into independent states. The English government has no authority over them either civil or ecclesiastical, any more than over the states of Holland. A civil authority is exercised over them, partly by Congress, partly by the Provincial Assemblies. But no one either claims or exercises any ecclesiastical authority at all. In this peculiar situation some thousands of the inhabitants of these states desire my advice; and in compliance with their desire, I have drawn up a little sketch.

2. "Lord King's 'account of the Primitive Church' convinced me many years ago, that bishops and presbyters are the same order, and consequently *have the same right to ordain*. For many years, I have been importuned from time to time, to exercise this right, by ordaining part of our travelling preachers. But I have still refused, not only for peace-sake, but because I was determined as little as possible to violate the *established* order of the National Church to which I belonged.

3. "But the case is widely different between England and North America. Here there are bishops who have a legal jurisdiction. In America there are none, neither any parish ministers. So that for some hundred miles together, there is none either to baptize, or to administer the Lord's Supper. Here therefore my scruples are at an end; and I conceive myself at full liberty, as I violate no order, and invade no man's right, by appointing and sending laborers into the harvest.

4. "I have accordingly appointed Dr. Coke and Mr. Francis Asbury to be joint superintendents over our brethren in North America; as also Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey to act as elders among them, by baptizing and administering the Lord's Supper. And I have prepared a liturgy little differing from that of the Church of England, (I think the

* This document is introduced by Mr. Wesley in the following manner: "What is the state of our societies in North America? *A.* It may best appear by the following letter. If any one is minded to dispute, concerning Diocesan Episcopacy he may: but I have better work."

best constituted National Church in the world,) which I advise all the travelling preachers to use on the Lord's Day, in all the congregations, reading the Litany only on Wednesdays and Fridays, and praying ex tempore on all other days. I also advise the elders to administer the Supper of the Lord on every Lord's Day.

5. "If any will point out a more rational and scriptural way of feeding and guiding these poor sheep in the wilderness, I will gladly embrace it. At present, I cannot see any better method than that I have taken.

6. "It has indeed been proposed to desire the English bishops to ordain part of our preachers for America. But to this I object: (1.) I desired the bishop of London to ordain only one; but could not prevail. (2.) If they consented we know the slowness of their proceedings, but the matter admits of no delay. (3.) If they would ordain them now, they would likewise expect to govern them. And how grievously would this entangle us. (4.) As our American brethren are now totally disentangled both from the state, and from the English hierarchy, we dare not entangle them again, either with the one or the other. They are now at full liberty, simply to follow the Scriptures and the primitive Church. *And we judge it best,* that they should stand fast in that liberty, wherewith God has so strangely made them free. JOHN WESLEY."

I have given entire, this letter directed to the brethren in this country. It is a record of his official act, in ordaining Dr. Coke, and his warrant, authorizing the action of those who sought his counsel in this country. Like all his other compositions, it is too plain to be misunderstood; and therefore needs no explanation. He recognizes the Methodists in America as already totally disentangled from the English hierarchy, not by his act, but by events over which he had no control. He did not break them off from the Church of England. The events of the Revolution had done this. He could not have connected them again therewith had he been so disposed. Protestant Episcopalians, as such, did not then exist in this country.—Their Church was not formed till some years after. And then with much difficulty did they obtain ordination of an English bishop. Not only Methodists, but the members of the Church of England were cut off from the parent stock by the same means, and had to set up for themselves.

The eighteen thousand souls in this land, already converted by the instrumentality of those whom Mr. Wesley had sent over, were truly like "sheep without a shepherd." They would naturally look up to him for counsel. Matters had come to a crisis, and action could be delayed no longer. His business was to save souls, more than to look after the unity of the Church of England, much as he loved her. His action

was decisive and prompt. The above letter declares what he did, and what he intended to do, with his reasons for so doing. That he deemed himself fully qualified to ordain men to the sacred office is clearly seen not only from this letter, but also from another, to his brother Charles, found on the same page, written near a year subsequently:

"For these forty years I have been in doubt concerning the question: "What obedience is due to heathenish priests and mitred infidels?" I have from time to time proposed my doubts to the most pious and sensible clergymen I knew. But they gave me no satisfaction; rather they seemed to be puzzled as well as me. Some obedience I always paid to the bishops, in obedience to the laws of the land. But I cannot see that I am under any obligation to obey them farther then those laws require."

"It is in obedience to these laws, that I have never exercised in England the *power* which I believe God has given me. I firmly believe I am a Scriptural *Episcopos*, (Bishop,) as much as any man in England or in Europe. *For the uninterrupted succession I know to be a fable, which no man ever did or can prove.* But this does in no wise interfere with my remaining in the Church of England, from which I have no more desire to separate than I had fifty years ago. I submit still (though sometimes with a doubting conscience) to mitred infidels."

Here we have his whole mind on the case, in his letter to the Methodists in America, and his defence of his course to his brother Charles, who was full of objections. Let the reader carefully look over this testimony, from Mr. Wesley himself (and this is not the hundredth part) and then ask himself whether it was, or was not his intention, to establish a true independent Church in America? The author of "Tracts for the People," had evidently read the works of Mr. Wesley. How then can his assertions be accounted for, supposing him to be an honest man? I desire to view him in the light of christian charity; "hope all things," and "believe all things," concerning him, most favorably. He either purposed to conceal the truth or did us the wrong through ignorance; which I will not decide. In either case, such slanderous and haughty insolence, merits most severe rebuke.

As the author of "Tract No. 4" seems to think, or at least tries to make his readers believe that Mr. Wesley did not ordain Dr. Coke, but only appointed him to a certain work of a mere temporary character, I will here also insert the letters of ordination furnished to Dr. Coke at the time, by Mr. Wesley:

"To all to whom these presents shall come, John Wesley, late Fellow of Lincoln College, in Oxford, presbyter of the Church of England, sendeth greeting:

"WHEREAS, Many of the people in the Southern provinces of North America, who desire to continue under my care, and still adhere to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England, are greatly distressed for want of ministers to administer the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper, according to the usage of the same Church: and whereas, there does not appear to be any other way of supplying them with ministers—

"Know all men, that I, JOHN WESLEY, think myself to be providentially called at this time to set apart some persons for the work of the ministry in America. And therefore, under the protection of Almighty God, and with a single eye to his glory, I have this day set apart as a superintendent, by the imposition of my hands, and prayer, (being assisted by other ordained ministers,) Thomas Coke, doctor of civil law, a presbyter of the Church of England, and a man whom I judge to be well qualified for that great work. And I do hereby recommend him to all whom it may concern, as a fit person to preside over the flock of Christ. In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and seal, this second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-four.

JOHN WESLEY."

My readers will by this time perceive that the whole of "Tract No. 4" is fully answered, as it goes upon the presumption from first to last that Mr. Wesley never intended to establish an independent Church any where. That he did not ordain Dr. Coke as a superintendent, but merely appointed him as a special messenger for a certain purpose. Here we have his letters of ordination written in the usual way; and Mr. Wesley declares he was assisted in the performance of the solemn duty by "other ordained ministers."

Having cleared up this point, and thrown confusion upon the face of the tract writer, clearly evincing that he is unworthy of belief, I shall turn my attention to quite another matter. Let Protestant Episcopalians of the High School take care of their own ark, lest we snatch from their crest the only laurel of which they boast, the personal succession of ordination. Mr. Wesley says "no man ever did or can prove it," and therefore very justly calls it a "fable."

Personal succession tested.

As those who believe in the uninterrupted personal succession of ordination from the Apostles to the present time, hold also in connexion with it, that there is no valid ministry with-

out it; and consequently consign all others to the uncovenanted mercies of God, it is meet and right that this point should be briefly examined. It is because the author of "Tract No. 4," believed in this dogma, that he asserts "Methodism is not a Church." "That it has no Ministry." "That it has no Sacrament, nor divine warrant." "That Methodists are therefore in rebellion against God." Because Mr. Wesley was only a presbyter (elder) in the Church, and not a bishop, therefore all his acts are null and void, and his ordinations valueless. On this ground he asserts, that the Methodist Episcopal Church is a mere "thing," their Sacraments "things," their Ministry "things." No more a Church than the "Abolition Society," "Moral Reform Society," or "Temperance Society."

It will readily be seen, therefore, that we have some reason for testing the high pretensions of such dogmatic and unneighborly *High Churchmen*. The community need not marvel, if such men are soon seen raising their hats most respectfully, and making a low bow, when they have occasion to speak of themselves. And if these most unkind, exclusive and uncharitable feelings toward christians of other denominations be the legitimate fruit and product of High Church principles, the peace and concord of the entire community require all lovers of good order to pray, from such principles "Good Lord deliver us."

The whole of this visionary theory, now making so much noise throughout the christian world, is based—

1. On the divine right of bishops, as distinct from presbyters or elders.

2. That these have existed and handed down the rite of consecration from the Apostles to the present time.

3. That he who has received this consecration from the hands of these personal successors of the Apostles (no matter what his morals) is a true minister of Christ, and none others; however manifest their call to the work of the Lord, abundant their labors, or extensive their success. This is the doctrine of all High Churchmen; and it is truly amusing to hear with what confidence these men announce to the world their high vocation, and certain commission, received directly from the Apostles.

In opposition to this deceptive, yet fond theory, we are prepared to show that the New Testament and all the fathers for

the first three hundred years of the christian era, and almost all subsequent divines, unite in declaring, that bishops and presbyters are the same. That neither Jesus Christ nor his Apostles ever appointed a third order of ministers.

Testimony from the New Testament.

The terms bishop and presbyter are used in the New Testament to express the same office.

Philippians, Chap. 1: 1. "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons." "Both the Greek and Latin fathers, do with one consent declare, that the Apostle here calls their presbyters their bishops."

Titus, Chap. 1: 5, 7. "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain *elders* (PRESBYTERS) in every city, as I had appointed thee: if any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children, not accused of riot or unruly. For a *bishop* must be blameless, as the steward of God," &c.—Nothing can be more clear than that elder and bishop are here used in the same sense and to express the same office. Ordain elders, for a bishop must be blameless. A man may as well aver that sovereign and king are not synonymous terms.

Acts, XX: 17. "And from Miletes he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders (PRESBYTERS) of the Church. And when they were come to him he said unto them, Take heed therefore unto yourselves and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers (bishops) to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

1 Peter, v: 1, 3. "The ELDERS which are among you I exhort, who am also an ELDER, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ;" (here is ministerial parity;) feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the *oversight* thereof, (acting the bishops) not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; "neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." Hear that ye mitred heads, and tremble!

Were I writing a full treatise on the subject, scores of the same class of texts should be introduced. These are sufficient, however, for my present purpose. They show clearly, that presbyters, elders, and bishops, are the same order and class of ministers. Their ordination, qualifications, duties and powers were the same. Where then is the divine right for episcopacy as the third order, for which High Churchmen contend? It cannot be found in the New Testament; the contrary is plain and evident. "That, and that only," says Bishop Taylor, "is of divine institution which Christ committed to the Apostles." Away then with the divine rights of prelates.

Testimony from the Fathers.

JEROME. "Presbyters and bishops were formerly the same. And before the devil incited men to make divisions in religion, and one was led to say, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, churches were GOVERNED by the common council of the PRESBYTERS. But afterward when every one in baptizing, rather made proselytes to himself, than to Christ, it was every where decreed that one person *elected* from the rest of the presbyters in each Church should be placed over the others, that the chief care of the Church devolving upon him, the seeds of division might be taken away, &c. Presbyters and bishops were the same in the Apostle's times."

Here is a reference to the origin of the practice of appointing one minister to a higher office than others. But it was done by election, for the sake of order and the prevention of division. No divine right is plead for it by this father in the Church. It was a mere matter of expediency, not of law.—The only plea Methodists ever make for their plan of Church government.

CLEMENS ROMANUS, A. D. 90. "The Apostles preaching through the countries and cities, appointed the first fruits of their conversion to be *bishops and deacons*, over such as should afterward believe, having first proved them by the spirit. Nor was this anything new; seeing that long before, it was written concerning bishops and deacons:—for thus saith the Scriptures, in a certain place, "I will appoint their *overseers* (bishops) in righteousness, and their *ministers* (deacons) in faith." "Bishops with St. Clemant," says Lord Barrington, "are always the same with elders or presbyters, as any one must see if they read the epistle."

IGNATIUS, A. D. 101. "Presbyters (elders) preside in the place of the council of the Apostles. Be ye subject to your presbyters, as to the Apostles of Jesus Christ, our hope. Let all reverence the presbyters (elders) as the sanhedrim of God, and college of Apostles."

POLYCARP, contemporary with Ignatius. "Polycarp and the presbyters that are with him, to the Church of God, which is at Philippi."—"Be subject to the presbyters (elders) and deacons, as unto God and Christ."

He never names bishops from first to last. Quotations similar, might be made from Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Tertullian, and Clemens Alexandrinus; but my limits forbid me to increase the catalogue.

Enough has been adduced to show that High Churchmen, who talk so largely about the fathers, have none of them in their favor, in making a distinction between ministers of God, exalting one to be a lord over the other. Giving the power of ordination exclusively, and of divine right to nominal bishops, and undervaluing the acts of all other ministers of God.—

"There is," says Powell, "a radical absurdity at the bottom of all these mighty pretensions about the power of ordination. It is as plain as that two and two make four, that the greater always includes the less. Now, the two sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper are the greatest ritual ordinances in the Christian Church. A sacrament is, by all divines, considered above all other ritual ordinances. Ordination is not a sacrament. It is therefore *less than a sacrament.* He that has power and authority to perform the greater, has power and authority to perform the less. All presbyters (elders) by the confession of our opponents, have power and authority to administer the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper, the greater; all presbyters, therefore, have power and authority to administer ordination, the less. This, to a reasonable mind, would settle the whole question."

Mr. Wesley was a regular presbyter in the Church of England, and had power confessedly to administer the sacraments. He believed that he had power to perform ordination, the less; and therefore did ordain Dr. Coke a superintendent, and deputed him to form and organize the Methodist Episcopal Church in North America. From him all Methodist ministers have received their ordinations, and with it they are perfectly satisfied. Nor would they give a fig to have the authority of their orders heightened by the imposition of the hands of the Primate of England. If men must be in the succession to be true ministers, we are in it as much as any clergymen in either Europe or America, according to the fathers. Mr. Wesley was ordained an elder by the very same bishops who are now declared, by modern High Churchmen, to be in the regular succession; and by whom these boasters were consecrated themselves. He was therefore in the true succession, themselves being witnesses. But the fathers and early christian writers declare, that elders and bishops were the same order and had the same right to ordain. Therefore Mr. Wesley had this right, as he fully believed he had; and exercised it, in erecting the Methodists in North America into an Episcopal Church. All Methodist ministers having received ordination from him, are therefore as truly in the succession contended for, as any ministers in Europe or America: the fathers being judges.

But we deny that the Church of God depends for its existence upon succession at all. "Jesus Christ is the same yes-

terday, to-day and forever." Should the Church, through the revolution of states, laxity of discipline, or general prevalence of vice and persecution become extinct, like the fires in our dwellings, God could and would kindle it up. He depends not upon frail and inconstant men for the perpetuity of his own institutions. The Church is founded on the Rock of Ages, not on Catholic bishops; and is perpetuated by its doctrines, discipline and ordinances, and its faith and piety. These are the true principles of succession.

Testimony of the Church of England.

WICKLIFFE, one of the first reformers in England, says:

"I boldly assert one thing, viz: that in the Primitive Church, or in the time of St. Paul, two orders of the clergy were sufficient—that is, a priest and a deacon. In like manner I affirm, that in the time of St. Paul, the presbyter and the bishop were the names of the same office."

BISHOP BURNET, in his History of the Reformation, gives an account of a convocation, with the King's Vicar General at their head, in which near forty of the principal bishops and clergymen of England, on considering this very subject, declare that bishops and presbyters, or elders, are the same office. "'That their power, authority and commission under Christ, are equal. That they have equal power and authority 'to ORDER (ordain) and consecrate others in the same room, order and office, whereunto they be called and admitted themselves.'" What now becomes of the divine right of bishops?

BISHOP CRANMER, to whom the Protestant Episcopalians are indebted for their book of common prayer and liturgy, says: "The bishops and priests were at one time, and were no two things; but both one office in the beginning of Christ's religion."

THE BISHOP OF LONDON. "I think the bishops were first; and yet I think it is not of importance whether the priest then made the bishop, or the bishop the priest, since there is so very small difference between a bishop and a priest, especially touching the *signification*."

BISHOP HOOKER. "Touching the ministry of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the whole body of the Church being divided into laity and clergy, the clergy are either presbyters (elders) or deacons."

Where are the *jure divino* bishops, then? I need not quote more authority. None are so blind as those who will not see. If these testimonials and proofs of ministerial parity are rejected by High Churchmen, all others will fail to convince.

The succession cannot be traced.

Eusebius, A. D. 320, undertook to collect evidence on this point, yet he declares he had to tread an almost untrodden path with scarce any lights to direct him. All with him was uncertainty and doubt. Bishop Pearson says, that Eusebius "had no archives or distyches to go by." That the "supposition that he had catalogues of the Roman bishops is *entirely vain*." Here then are more than three hundred years, in which there is confessedly no certain traces of the path in which the boasted succession travelled downward. Dr. Cave even says, "that it can never be made out that Peter was Bishop of Rome." Archbishop Cranmer says, "it is far from being certain that Peter was ever at Rome." And if he was (which no one can prove) who succeeded him? This no one on earth can tell either. Tertullian, Rufinus and Epiphanius, with most Latin authors say, Clement succeeded Peter at Rome. But Irenæus, Eusebius, Jerome and Augustine positively contradict the others, and say that *Linus succeeded Peter*. And yet Bishop Pearson has proved that Linus died before Peter. Dr. Comber, a very learned divine of the Church of England says, upon the whole matter, "there is no certainty who was Bishop of Rome *next to the Apostles*, and therefore the Romanists BUILD UPON AN ILL BOTTOM, when they lay so great weight on their *personal succession*." Little did the learned Dr. think that men in his own Church would soon be as silly as Romanists!

We shall be as little successful in fixing upon a third, as upon a first or second Bishop of Rome. Cletus and Anacletus are here contended for by two parties, and at last it turns out that Cletus never had an existence. And to this day no man knows who was the third Bishop of Rome. The Roman Pontificial, a book containing the lives and decrees of the early popes, is the work from which catalogues are generally taken. And yet Dr. Comber denominates it a forgery.

The same darkness and mystery rest upon both the name and history of the fourth Bishop of Rome. Dr. Prideaux, a thorough and learned churchman, with Cabassute and Comber, all agree in declaring that no confidence can be placed in the pretended personal successions of the first bishops of Rome. And in several of the following centuries, Platina says all was full of confusion. How could it be otherwise? Wars and

tumults, confusion in both Church and State, and the well known illiteracy of the times, for hundreds of years together, would naturally and necessarily destroy all certainty, and result in perfect confusion. A question to all mathematicians—How much faith does it require to be a High Churchman? Let no man despise their faith for it is verily strong.

Election of the Bishops of Rome.

If we turn from the scene of confusion in which the paucity of historic detail has left the facts, on which the theory of "succession" professedly rests, and inquire into the *manner* in which Roman bishops and popes were wont to reach the eminence, constituting them successors of the Apostles, confusion will be worse than confounded, and folly stultified.

The elections of the bishops of Rome from a very early period, were scenes of such violence and bloodshed as to almost make one tremble to recite them. But duty to the Church in general, and Protestantism in particular, requires me in this connexion to refer to it. "For about three hundred years, the popes were made by the mandates of the Emperors," and the Church had little or nothing to do with the matter. In putting down these facts, I will simply state them, omitting to name my authorities, for the sake of brevity. The bishops of Rome were elected in the most infamous way, and themselves a series of monsters. "Elected frequently by women of the most abandoned character." "The vilest and most powerful women ruled in the court of Rome. False popes, their *paramours*, were thrust into the chair of Peter, who, in being numbered as popes, serve no purpose except to fill up the catalogue of the popes of Rome." I will simply ask by the way, were persons thus elected, legitimate successors of the Apostles and representatives of the Saviour of the world? yet there is actually no other way for the succession principle to be maintained.

But there is another monstrous shoal, as a sailor would say, in the way of such as wish to sail into the succession harbor; now-a-days deemed by some the only safe one. These bishops and popes have been at war among themselves. "Sometimes no less than four pretenders to the popedom existed at one and the same time." Each had his party, each in turn excommunicated his antagonists, loading them with curses in the name of the Lord.. Thus matters continued, convulsing the whole

christian world (so called) until by intrigue or violence, poison, assassination or banishment, three had disappeared, and the victorious villain reigned in triumph. The successful one unfortunately was generally the least worthy, as his having more cunning, being more warlike and wicked, in most cases were the reasons for his triumph.

If it be replied to this, that a "plurality of popes by no means prejudices the succession of ordination, as the same person who is not a rightful pope yet may be a rightful bishop, and consequently may have a just right to exercise the power of ordination, though he may not have a just right to exercise the papal authority, as received in the Church of Rome."—Dr. Wells. To this Powell replies thus: "For nearly a thousand years, it does not appear that any individual previously a bishop, was elected Bishop of Rome. And during this time there had been nearly one hundred bishops, or rather popes of Rome, and thirteen schisms in the popedom." The men, therefore, who usurped the pope's chair were no bishops, yet the succession is compelled to come through these presbyters or perhaps lay usurpers. Kings who contend for crowns and honors, fight most lustily; nor is it expected that men having little else to recommend them to public regard, save the blandishments of an external and showy religion, and the fable of succession, will yield very easily to conviction, though the evidence against them be most positive.

It is a well known fact, at least to all acquainted with the subject, that many who were merely presbyters (elders) were nevertheless elected to the popedom, "and ordained several of the English *bishops and archbishops*." Yet these popes were afterwards deposed as usurpers, and so have been esteemed ever since—while the English prelates who received ordination at their hands, have retained the rank to which they were raised by usurping presbyters; and what is more, continued to hand down their pseudo authority to succeeding generations. Who then at this day can trace the true succession? The whole Church was divided against itself. The history of the family through which the succession comes, is a bloody and shameful history. Wars, bloodshed, faction, poison and simony, were some of the means by which many of the pretended successors obtained power to confer orders. That men, with all these facts before their eyes, should plead for a regular and valid succession of orders in the Church, and

condemn, as being "No Church" and in "Rebellion against God," such as doubt on the subject, is a marvel, of all marvels the greatest.

But I cannot in a small tract tell the one hundredth part of this solemn affair. It would too much swell these pages to comport with my purpose, were I to show the fearful acts of simony by which popes, bishops and archbishops obtained their honors, and powers of ordination. And then to quote the long list of authorities, in the Church of England, who declare "that all orders conferred by men who obtained their authority by money, are null and void."

In consequence of this, and acting on this same principle, the Waldenses re-baptized their children, who had been baptized by popish priests. And Calvin and the Reformers required all ministers, coming to them from the Romish Churches, to renounce their former ordination, as every way unlawful and opposed to the order which the Lord Jesus Christ established in the Church. In their view, therefore, the English Church has a spurious ordination to this day, even if they were able to prove its uninterrupted transmission. They declare, it was received from men who bought the power to ordain, with money; and were therefore like Simon Magus, in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity.

That the Continental Reformers were not ordained in the same way, and by the same authority, of which High Churchmen now so much boast, was not necessity, but choice. This even Bishop Taylor admits, as he thus quotes M. Du Plessis, "a man of honor and learning." "That at the first Reformation there were many archbishops and cardinals in Germany, England, France and Italy, that joined in the Reformation, whom they *might*, but did *not* employ in their ordinations. It is their constant and resolved practice, at least in France, that if any one returns to them, they will re-ordain him."

The conclusion then, cannot be avoided, that papal ordinations of the English clergy, from bishops to deacons, both before and at the Reformation, were null and void to all intents and purposes. Nor are High Churchmen able to trace one ordination to any other source, than papal Rome. To do this they have faithfully tried, (to avoid the disgraceful history of which we have been speaking,) but every effort has been and will forever be a failure. "The English clergy since the Reformation, all trace their consecration to archbishop

Parker. Barlow was his only consecrator, yet they cannot now prove that Barlow himself was ever consecrated. No registration of it can be found." Here then the opinionated Puseyite, with all his exclusiveness, can trace his ordination, but no farther. He condemns all others for want of ability to trace the history of their consecration higher than the Reformation, and in turn we defy him to produce evidence which would be received before any civil court, that Barlow was ever consecrated. Assertions in such a case are out of place. Men who take such ground should be able to sustain it by evidence the most undoubted. No muttering, gentlemen; give us your proof and thus silence all gainsayers.

But there is a device of recent origin, the real object of which it is not difficult to ascertain. The enormous wickedness of the papal bishops has induced a blush of shame, and a desire among the English clergy to trace their authority to another source. Hence the declaration is made "that there was a regularly constituted Church in Britain long before Romanism was established there." It is proper therefore that a few remarks should be made on this point.

The obscurity resting on the early history of the British Island, should most certainly teach us to be cautious how we make assertions in relation to its religious history. There is no mention of bishops in Great Britain until the middle of the fourth century. Of course, no one can trace Episcopal ordination higher than that. But at that time, and long subsequently, bishops and presbyters or elders were titles of the same office. The abbot who first preached in Britain without success, was a presbyter; and Aidan, who succeeded him, was appointed and ordained bishop by a company of presbyters or elders. Bede, who wrote A. D. 731, is said to be the only historian on whose statements the least reliance can be placed. And this historian says "that in A. D. 666, one Wini was the only *rightly consecrated* bishop in all Britany." A few scraps can be thus collected, so unconnected and far separated in time, that no correct evidence can be adduced from them in proof of a succession of ordination. And if it could be traced, it would be found to originate in an assembly of elders only.—Here succession bigotry also fails.

This purer state of things, however, lasted only a few years in England, when the ministers of the Pope came, and, by blood and slaughter, putting these ministers aside, took the reins

themselves, and held them until Henry VIII. quarrelled with the Pope, and set up for himself. For near a thousand years, therefore, Romanism reigned in Great Britain with but little interruption. Will any man believe, that provided the British Church had been planted by St. Paul, the least remnant of it could have been preserved during this long period, in which historians never so much as name it? It were a monstrous presumption to think so. I say again, gentlemen of the exclusives, please give us facts, or we cannot believe; though you in your kindness consign us to the bottomless pit for our infidelity, as you have done to the uncovenanted mercies of God.

Conclusion.

The limits which I have prescribed to myself, will not allow me to proceed further in this investigation. Nor is it necessary. To all candid enquirers after truth, the matter is now sufficiently plain. In the facts as stated above, I have principally followed "Mr. Powell on Succession," a work that should be in the hands of every man who desires full information on a question now engrossing so much attention, both in Europe and in this country. It is not so marvellous that the divine right of bishops should be warmly contended for in a monarchical country, where the Throne itself is supported by similar arguments. But it is most certainly a little strange that, in a country such as ours, where rank is disregarded, and "all men are born free and equal," men should be found to reach forth their hands to sustain a theory so enslaving in its tendency, and so perfectly unsupported by facts.

The object of the Church, is the preservation and perpetuation of true faith and scriptural piety among men. The true succession, is the *succession* of faith. Her Great Head has laid down no special form of Church government. Had he done so, we would follow it at all hazards. Having not seen fit to do so, the Church is left to choose her own course, and adopt such plans as may best secure the great object proposed. That men differ in their views as to which is the plan best calculated to spread the knowledge of God and work with efficiency, is not to be wondered at. Uniformity in all things, even in religious matters, should not be expected—perhaps not desired. Mr. Wesley preferred the Episcopal form of Church government; and, therefore, as we have already seen, ordained

and appointed Dr. Coke, a superintendent, (names alter not the nature of things,) directing him to come to America and consecrate Francis Asbury to act with him, as a joint superintendent over the Methodist Church in this country ;—he thus intentionally and actually formed it into an Episcopal Church, believing himself as much a bishop as any man in Europe.—If he did not so intend, why abridge, and propose a liturgy for our use? But Mr. Wesley was not at that time a High Churchman, whatever he had been before. It was not a *jure divino* bishop that he intended to constitute. He was too well read to believe in such folly. Nor have we any such bishops now. We fully believe in ministerial parity *jure divino*. Yet still we are Episcopalians in our form of Church order. Our bishops are elected by their brethren as general superintendents over the whole work; and entrusted with certain powers, deemed necessary, efficiently to carry the Gospel of "the blessed God" to every creature,

"In the wide waste as in the city full."

Mr. Wesley's object, in the formation of such a Church was to "spread scriptural holiness over the whole earth," by a well regulated and permanent system of itineracy. That such a form of Church government, is best suited to an itinerant arrangement for ministerial labor, is believed not only by Methodists, but by almost all, who have carefully looked into the matter. So far it has worked well, and in our opinion more efficiently than any other form would have done. But the Methodists are far from being *exclusives*. Whilst they take the course to them deemed most conducive to the end proposed, they desire others should think and act for themselves. That liberty which they demand, they are fully willing others should enjoy in common. They wish to lord it over no one, and he who attempts to lord it over them, would do well not to plead divine authority for smiting his fellow servant. They are fully satisfied with their form of Church government—with their ministerial authority and use of the sacraments. What they most crave is more holiness, more of the mind of Christ, and the spirit of their great work. None of these can the Protestant Episcopal Church give them, if they make application. Like the oil of the wise virgins, we presume if we were to apply, they have "none to spare." Could Protestant Episcopalians show a better Church, a holier ministry, and a

more devoted people, none would rejoice more than the Methodists, whom they effect to ridicule and despise.

But we would humbly ask, where are the fruits of this boasted and much talked of "succession?" This is a legitimate question which Episcopalians are bound to answer to the public, to whom they have appealed. If God so specially dwells with them, as to refuse to acknowledge all other Churches, we have a right to expect to see much fruit. Are more converted with them than with others? Do more signs follow these "Apostolic Successors?" Are their members more devout, holy and self-denying? Have more and greater revivals of true religion followed in the train of successionists, than others, from the first until now? Have such ministers, as are ever harping on this subject, swept away more of the moral darkness resting on the minds of the people, or saved more men from vice and sin, "plucking them out of the fire?" That machine which does the work for which it was constructed most expeditiously and perfectly, is always esteemed best; and very justly, too, by all men of common sense. God forbid, that Methodists should glory in any thing the Lord has done by them. But still to us it seems quite strange, that Protestant Episcopal ministers should preach the success of Christianity in the first ages, as an evidence of its being the work of God, and not of man. Yet, when they refer to the success of the Methodist Episcopal Church, declare gravely, that God is not in it, any more than He is in Mahomedanism, which was propagated by the sword. We do not appeal to our success as evidence that our Church forms are right, and all others wrong: but we do say with Gamaliel, "if it be of men it will come to naught;" but if it be of God, Protestant Episcopalians cannot overthrow it by detraction and slander. Methodism has not succeeded by their aid from the first until now, but in spite of them. They have done all they could against us, (with a few honorable exceptions,) from the time of Mr. Wesley's conversion until now. And "Tract No. 4" seems to say they are not willing to drop the cudgel yet. I am sorry to be compelled thus to speak. But respect for the shade of Mr. Wesley, and the Church to whom I owe everything, constrains me.

In charity I am ready to believe that it is not themselves, but the principle for which they contend, that does all the mischief. This same *succession principle* led to the persecu-

tion of the Waldenses among the Alps, the Lollards in England, Luther, Melancthon, Zuingle and Calvin on the Continent; and the Puritans, Wesley and Whitfield, at a subsequent period in England. These were great reformers and revivalists, and no doubt are now enjoying the fruit of their toils.—They pretended to no principle of succession except the succession of faith and holiness, yet their histories abound with light and interest. But who persecuted them? The very men who pretended to be successors of the meek Apostles.—We had hoped that this spirit had died away, and kindness and love was generally prevailing between the various sects and denominations. But it seems we have calculated without book. This spirit of "the bond woman" still lives, and persecutes to fancied nonentity, the children of the free. We need go no farther than to "Tract No. 4," for evidence upon this point. Straws show the course of the wind. Were it not for the laws of our land, that protect Methodists and others who think with them on the matter of "Succession," exclusive bigotry would no doubt reach us in other ways beside the publication of tracts. There has not a drop of Protestant blood been shed from the first, but what can be traced to this same principle of succession or divine right, as its cause. We have no idea that the High Church portion (for they differ among themselves) of the Protestant Episcopal Church intend any such thing, but we are too well taught by the past to allow them the privilege.

I call upon all of every denomination, who cast away the doctrine of High Church exclusiveness as a mere fable, to think of this fact. Once give these men what they evidently long for as ardently as David panted for the fulness of God, and farewell all religious liberty. No man will then be allowed to think for himself. And should any one be so unfortunate as to think differently from those who profess to have charge of his soul, punishment, racks and tortures, will be the certain consequence. I would trust one man with this power as soon as another. What has been once, may be again. And is there not danger? Let any one look at the signs of the times. Romanists now spread before the world, in the public prints, what a few years since they would not have dared publish. In a recent number of the Catholic Herald, is an account of a miraculous cure effected by a piece of the "*Saviour's robe.*" The evident leaning of Protestant

Episcopalians, emboldens Catholics to begin to lead us back to the superstitions of the dark ages. This same divine right of prelates, led to those superstitions of the middle ages, which Protestantism has blown to the four winds of Heaven. The incipient steps by which they are to be brought back, should be met by all true Protestants. This is no bare controversy between Methodists and High Churchmen, but a conflict between the spirit of Protestantism and the spirit of Popery. All those who possess the former, are therefore alike interested in opposing the latter.

Reference has recently been had to the Reformation in England, and its results extolled, in comparison with those following the Reformation on the Continent.* My limits allow me barely to touch this question now. But let any one acquainted with the facts, review both Reformations impartially, and see to what conclusions he will come. The one was the work of comparatively feeble individuals, when the surrounding darkness was most discouraging. The other originated with a rough Monarch, (Henry VIII.,) who could do as he pleased, and whose motives in the whole transaction have never been the matter of much praise. Nor was the English Church half reformed down to the time of Mr. Wesley. Many of the English clergy, even in the time of Queen Elizabeth, desired her to allow them to lay aside the Popish dress in public service; but she constantly and resolutely refused. Failing in their efforts, they were wont to console themselves with the belief that their children would perfect what they had confessedly only commenced. But how were these good men mistaken! The progress is now backward instead of forward. All Europe is convulsed with this retrograde movement. Nor has the Papal *habit* been laid aside to the present day. We say nothing against it, because it is a trifling matter; but let none deny but that it is purely Papal.

Whatever else the Reformation did for the English clergy, it did not remove the spirit of persecutiug others who differed from them. It was bishops, and other pretended "successors," who so harrassed the Puritans that they had to take refuge in this country. It was clergymen of the Protestant Church of England who set the mobs on Mr. Wesley, and drove even Charles Wesley and his friends from the com-

* A Sermon by Rev. Mr. Major, recently published in Harrisburg, Pa.

munion table of the Church of which he and they were members. One would think it needed another Reformation under such circumstances. And as to the piety and purity of faith retained among these English clergy, and boasted successors of the Apostles, who plead exclusive right to administer the sacraments, let any one read the life and times of Mr. Wesley, and see for himself. And then hear Mr. Wesley himself, who most certainly had a right to know the truth in the case, call the bishops "*mitred infidels.*"

Finally, let the enquiry be proposed—what would this community have been at this hour, had none but High Churchmen, who so freely condemn others, labored in the Lord's vineyard? Temperance Societies they have never aided from the first, but in many instances opposed them, with all their power. How much have they done to promote the circulation of the Scriptures? I ask for facts. I believe they stand aloof altogether, refusing to touch the American Bible Society with one of their fingers. When reasoned with on the subject, the ministers are wont to reply, the Church ought to do it.—Why then does she not do it, and supply the destitute, who are starving for the bread of life? Perhaps they are afraid of starting an "unwarranted degree or species of private judgment,"* or interpretation! of which some of them are evidently cautious!! The same arguments which would have the weight of a feather against private judgment, would lay with equal weight against putting the Bible into the hands of the laity at all. We now, therefore, understand these modern apostles of the council of Trent. If they can gain their points, the Holy Scriptures are to be taken from the people, and all are to go to "The Church" for the true sense of God's word. But who is "The Church," that we may know to whom we must make application in such an emergency? It is not the pile of bricks in which the good people are wont to worship. It cannot be the prayer book, for only a small part of the Scriptures are therein expounded. It cannot certainly be the writings of old divines, for these differ much among themselves, and more, from modern writers. It will be answered—the Church means the great body of clergy and laity of which she is composed. Is it, verily? Well, suppose I desire to know the sense of certain passages of Scripture,

* Sermon by Rev. Mr. Major.

to whom must application be made? Shall I be under the necessity of calling the whole body together in order to be sure I have the true meaning? The reply will be, "Oh no, this is quite unnecessary; simply call on the minister of the parish in which you reside, and he will make it all plain."—The mystery is out at last. These apostolic successors desire to bring the people at their feet, (as things were once before,) that they may receive honor and praise; the very process by which Romanism subdued the people, and erected the confessional. How different this from the course taken by "The Great Teacher?" He said to all, "*search the Scriptures.*" And the Apostles praised the Bereans, because they "daily searched the Scriptures" to see if even Apostolic exposition was correct. Let that minister hide his face and blush for very shame, who dares in this day, invade even by implication, the right of private judgment. Let the Bible have free course—better that a thousand errors arise, than to take the revealed will of God from those to whom it was given. I tremble for Protestantism, when such sentiments are uttered in a Protestant community without a word of reproof. I know that the word *unwarranted*, in the above sentence, will by some be deemed a sufficient expletive to shield the offender. With me it is not. Such language is uncommon for Protestants, nor should it be suffered to pass without a becoming rebuke.

I see by a reference to Bishop M'Ilvaine's last charge to the clergy of the Diocese of Ohio, that I am not alone in my views or fears on the present signs of the times. The Bishop says:

"Since then (this new system of teaching) has been continually enlarging its influence, multiplying disciples, infecting partially those whom it did not poison entirely, and enfeebling the hold of the truth upon those whom it did not wholly pervert, it is now fast preparing minds in which it has not yet effected a lodgment. Every new publication of its leading organs exhibits some new development of designs, of tendencies, of results. It displays a boldness in avowing its objects, and uncovering its principles and springs, which once would have been its death. * * * * * * It is precisely and avowedly the same struggle as that of the Reformation. The object of the one side is boastfully published, to "*Unprotestantize*" the Church—to get back what the Reformation drove away. The main difference of circumstance is, that the Reformers contended with Romanism in its dotage, with all its horrible corruption of morals around it to shame it, with all Europe groaning under its oppression, and with all its poetic associations of antiquity, drowned in the practical consciousness of its iniquity. The contest is now with Romanism revived in its early

youthfulness. * * * * * The old root of Rome, dead at the top, has thrown up in the midst of us a youthful sapling, vigorous, aspiring, full of life, "heady high minded." It is already a great tree. I believe most solemnly, that under this new shape, we have a revival of *anti-christian heresy* and opposition to the "truth as it is in Jesus," which cannot be dreaded too seriously or resisted too earnestly. There is no controversy of these times comparable with this.

"You see, brethren, where the real question lies. It is simply whether we shall be guided, in the infinitely momentous interests of the soul, by the word of God, or of man? * * * To speak of aid in the interpretation of Scripture is one thing—to speak of *authority* is quite another. * * * Shall we wrap up as a *great secret* all that is blessed and comforting in the Gospel, hiding it under veils, instead of declaring it from the house tops; putting the light of life under the *altar cloth*, &c.

"The system that carries all this within it—the system that does not necessarily revolt at all this as utterly false and vile—deserves itself to be utterly reprobated. No milder language becomes it. We have no right to speak more softly of what must be so abominable in the sight of Him, whose last charge was 'Go, preach the Gospel to every creature.'"

So much from a distinguished Bishop in the Protestant Episcopal Church. Let tyros, in the ministry of the same Church, sit at the feet of such godly bishops, and learn not to hood-wink the oracles of God, or deny the right of private judgment to those who read them. But hear the Bishop again on baptismal regeneration:

"In truth, a greater dishonor is not done to the dignity of the Gospel and the understandings of men, by the Popish fiction of transubstantiation, than by the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, as it is boasted by this system, for its great central position and chief glory. In the former we are required to believe, that consecrated bread has been changed into the actual flesh of Christ, while all our senses testify that it is as much bread as any that is unconsecrated. In the latter we are required to believe that millions upon millions of persons have been made new creatures, the subjects of a great moral change, wherein the old man was put off and the new put on, actually, fully, spiritually, in the strictest sense; while our senses testify that they are precisely the same wicked men, and always have been, as the unbaptized and ungodly around them. * * * Strip this wonderful regeneration of all the transcendental and mystic verbiage with which they hide its real nature, and you will find nothing left but a name, a fiction of ages of Papal darkness, wherein the Bible was almost an unused book. * * * What then must be the spirituality and holiness of a system of divinity which rests upon, and is conformed to such a basis?"

I need not say more. The builders of such a Babel will soon quarrel among themselves, and let Methodists alone, when such men as a Bishop of their own Church comes out,

and throws the apple of discord into their ranks. He has evinced for years the character of a man of God. In this instance he truly speaks as one; may his voice be heard and heeded by his less wise, and less Protestant brethren. I really hope that the censure on the exercise of "private judgment," in the sermon referred to, was a mere *lapsus linguæ*, that so much was not intended as is expressed. But the illustration following, as to the course of 'Luther and Calvin,' seems to fix its meaning. Let such preachers and writers remember, that the Bible is the book of God, and he has guarded it better than men can do it. Send it out then as He gave it, fearing no consequences. His name is written upon it in plain and imperishable characters, not to be effaced either by the hand of violence or error. The devil and men have been rubbing it for ages. But let them rub on, give them full liberty to do their worst, and spend all their Liliputian strength to efface the name of God from the sacred pages; like our door plates, the more the Bible is rubbed, the brighter the name of its great author will appear.

These proud men plead that they are the only Church of the living God, "the Methodists and all others are without a ministry, without sacraments, or a divine warrant;" and therefore living in sin, because they join not the Church party! God pity the world, should it ever occur! What would this country have been at this time, as to religious culture, had there been no religious teachers, save those self-styled successors of the Apostles? In the larger towns, they try to make a little show, after other and more self-denying ministers have come—opened the way and broke up the ground. The work of the pioneer is evidently too hard for them, hence they are careful to let others go before—and after the people are civilized and christianized, and the roughness of their manners have given place to the refinements of civilized life, then these successors make their appearance to disturb the quiet of the neighborhood, by preaching and circulating tracts—not to show the people the way in which they can live more holy—but to convince them that they are all wrong, and have been from the first, and there is no certainty of getting to Heaven unless they leave all and follow them. They always succeed better in proselyting from other Churches, than in leading sinners to God.

How would their present ministers answer to send out into the mountains and valleys within twenty miles of this place?

Could they be induced to spoil their fingers, or soil their raiment, in driving their own beast, and attending to him, while looking up the lost sheep in the wide and uncultivated portions of our country? And how would they appear before the unlettered and staring peasantry, preaching in smoky private dwellings, exchanging their gorgeous robes two or three times during a service? Not speaking a word either to God or men, but reading the whole. There must be a mistake somewhere. These Apostles "in silk" may do good in some places, but I leave it to the common sense of all men, whether they are adapted to break up new ground and carry the Gospel "into regions beyond." If, therefore, they (as they evidently do) depend upon others to go before and prepare their way, the least they can do is to treat these pioneers with some respect, by whose labors, sufferings, and perils their Churches are filled up, and without whose previous efforts they would not even find a place to preach. If every man now hearing Episcopal ministers, who received his awakening and religious impressions among the Methodists, were to withdraw and leave them, their congregations would be far less than they are. This we are far from desiring, however.

But will those who owe much to that form of christianity, termed Methodism, join in the mad cry of persecution now raised by High Churchmen against us? I can hardly believe it—yet so it may be notwithstanding. Well be it so, we cannot help it—things must take their course. We are not at all fearful of their injuring us. If God be for us, who can be against us. We regret this warfare between those who should be at peace. Self-defence, however, is the first law of nature. We are not responsible for any mischief resulting from these publications. If a gentleman should fire the town, and the authorities, in arresting the progress of the destructive element, were to find it necessary to blow up his own residence, but few would commiserate, or pity him. He might whine to the winds, and bear his loss alone, whilst all honest citizens would say he suffers justly. In this case also, let the aggressor suffer his own shame.

The author of this tract hopes that Methodists will pray for their enemies and those who despitefully use and persecute them. Perhaps Protestant Episcopalians will deny that they are enemies to Methodists. If they can sell and circulate the slanderous tract, to which I have herein replied, all their pro-

fessed friendship for us is like "the kisses of an enemy which are treacherous." The man who could thus conceive of me as a religious man, must have a mean view of me as a business man and civillian. He may use fair words, but his "heart meditates mischief." If the preacher has circulated them with the knowledge of his people unreproved by them, you need not look upon them as your friends, whatever their pretentions to the contrary—for they are not. A man cannot be my friend who will hear me slandered with complacency or even calm silence. Whatever they may do to you, act yourselves as the followers of Jesus Christ. As they despise all others, as did the Pharisees of old, let them live by themselves, as the fancied favorites of Heaven, if they so deem best. We know in whom we have believed, and who has told us, the time would come when "he who killed" would deem himself doing God service. They have already thrown us out of "the Synagogue," (Church,) and left us to the uncovenanted mercies of God. They, therefore, plainly declare that they deem us heathens. To their own master they stand or fall, and so do we. I know you cannot adopt their notions any sooner than myself. A Churchman once told me that the succession of ordination from the Apostles would be valid if it came through a *cat*. If they can believe this, they have full liberty to do so; but we have not so learned Christ. Perhaps the difficulty with High Churchmen in relation to us is similar to that of the disciples of John, in reference to Christ—"He made and baptized more disciples than John." In that case, the whole affair originated in the same spirit which led the Jews to deliver up Christ, and Joseph's brethren to sell him into Egypt. If so, they should share more in our pity than condemnation.—"Envy shall slay the silly one." The author of "Tract No. 4" has intimated a doubt whether the thousands who have died in connexion with Methodism, have gone to Heaven! Whatever may be truth in the case, it behooves each of us to live more holy, labor more ardently, and pray more fervently; and so "work out our salvation with fear and trembling," "that we may be found of Him in peace, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing." AMEN.